

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7794
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 0361

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, BG, NP
SUBJ: KING BIRENDRA'S VISIT TO BANGLADESH

REF: 77 KATHMANDU 5563 (NOTAL)

1. KING BIRENDRA AND QUEEN AISHWARYA OF NEPAL PAID A
GOODWILL VISIT TO BANGLADESH JANUARY 12 THROUGH 15.
DURING THE THREE-DAY VISIT, THE KING HAD SEVERAL MEETINGS
WITH PRESIDENT ZIA, ATTENDED A LARGE RECEPTION AT A
LOCAL PARK, VISITED THE BANGLADESH ACADEMY OF RURAL
DEVELOPMENT AT NJMILLA AND TOOK A RIVER CRUISE. HIS
RECEPTION WAS WARM AND CORDIAL AND THE PRESS COMMENT
UNIVERSALLY FAVORABLE.

2. THE VISIT, THE KING'S FIRST TO BANGLADESH AND A
RECIPROCATION OF PRESIDENT ZIA'S VISIT TO NEPAL IN
DECEMBER, WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY CEREMONIAL DESPITE SEVERAL
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PRO FORMA AGREEMENTS TO EXPAND TRADE AND CULUTRAL RELATIONS.
OF REGIONAL IMPORTANCE, THE TWO LEADERS DISCUSSED THE
DEVELOPMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, AND IN A JOINT COMMUNIQUE,
AGREED TO TAKE "POSITIVE STEPS" TO EXPLORE COOPERATIVE
POSSIBILITIES SO THAT "ALL COUNTRIES OF THE REGION...COULD
BENEFIT...FROM COOPERATION IN IRRIGATION POWER, RIVER
NAVIGATION AND FLOOD CONTROL." PRESIDENT ZIA'S SUPPORT FOR

NEPAL AS A ZONE OF PEACE WAS ALSO MENTIONED IN THE COMMUNIQUE AS WAS THE STANDARD CALL FOR THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A ZONE OF PEACE. ON A BILATERAL LEVEL, A JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION WAS ESTABLISHED TO EXAMINE AREAS IN WHICH TRADE AND COMMERCE COULD BE INCREASED. THE MINISTERIAL-LEVEL COMMISSION IS SCHEDULED TO MEET ALTERNATELY ONCE A YEAR IN EACH COUNTRY, AND DR. M.N. HUDA, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, WAS NAMED CO-CHAIRMAN FOR BANGLADESH. AN AGREEMENT TO EXPAND CULTURAL, SIENTIFIC AND EDUCATION EXCHANGES WAS ALSO SIGNED DURING THE VISIT.

3. ALTHOUGH NOT STATED EXPLICITLY DURING THE VISIT, EACH COUNTRY'S SENSITIVITY TO NEIGHBORING INDIA MOTIVATED THE DESIRE FOR CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND NEPAL. WITHE THE EXCHANGE OF VISITS WITHIN THE PAST MONTH, IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE RELATIONSHIP IS CONSIDERABLY ENHANCED.
BERGESEN

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